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THE NATIONAL
BUILDING CODE

The newly-revised code
is a guide to minimum
standards for the protection
of public safety.

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of EMPLOYMENT FACTS

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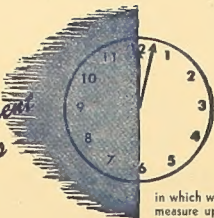
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Brief Employment Facts



THE NATIONAL BUILDING CODE

We all have a right to expect that the homes, work places, and public buildings in which we spend a great part of our lives will measure up to modern standards of safety.

We expect that they will be built in such a way as to prevent fires, reduce accident hazards, and protect health. If we are building owners, we look for sound structural design. If we work in the building trades, we expect to be safeguarded by good accident prevention practices.

But good building practices do not come about by chance. In general, standards in Canada are set by the municipalities under the authority of the provincial governments. Many of the larger communities have developed their own detailed building codes, but many of the smaller ones have neither the facilities nor the funds to undertake a job of this magnitude.

Canada's first National Building Code, completed in 1941, was intended to meet the need for a ready-made guide to minimum standards which could be adopted anywhere in Canada with only minor changes. It was hoped that the code would help to bring about uniformity of building standards all across the country and make it easier to keep those standards up to date. Even though the war years made it impossible to carry out the revisions which were soon shown to be needed, this first code was adopted widely. In 1950, it was in active use in more than 200 municipalities and served as a reference in another 400.

Since the war's end, work has gone forward on a revision of the code, using the experience gained in the application of the earlier edition. The revised Canadian Building Code was published this spring. It is a complete reorganization of the material, and includes subjects which have never before appeared in traditional building codes.

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The construction industry, organized labour, the provincial governments and federal research facilities are all represented on the Associate Committee on the National Building Code, which with its technical sub-committees drew up the revised code. This committee, a continuing independent body sponsored by the National Research Council, has two responsibilities—to promote uniformity in building regulations in Canada, and to maintain the National Building Code as an up-to-date document. The National Research Council's Division of Building Research coordinates the work of the Committee

and the production of the code, and supplies technical assistance. The standards are designed to interlock with those drawn up by the Canadian Standards Association in such fields as woodworking, electrical wiring, and materials as well as with the residential building standards of the Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation.

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There are eight distinct parts in the new code, each one self-contained and with a minimum of cross-references to other parts. Thus, any one part can be revised without affecting the usefulness of the others, and a major revision of the entire code should never again be necessary. Only the first part, which deals with administration, might have to be changed to adapt the code for the use of any municipality.

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Particularly important to workers in the building industry is the new part devoted to construction safety measures, containing details of the steps which must be taken to make construction safe for all those working on the job as well as for the public. Under fourteen headings, this part covers such subjects as housekeeping, handling and storing of materials, construction equipment, excavation, hoists, scaffolds, demolition and first aid. This part has been reprinted as a pocket-size pamphlet.

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Another departure from traditional codes is that part which deals with construction from the point of view of the use and occupancy of buildings, regardless of their type of construction. It lays down the standards which must be followed in any building when it is to be used for specific purposes—standards for buildings making or storing hazardous materials, for manufacturing plants and retail establishments, for hospitals, restaurants and institutions, and so on. In this part, the code gives minimum standards for such things as exits, lighting, fire walls and loading.

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Of the other parts, one deals with climate as it affects construction; something new in building codes, but essential in a country with a climate as varied as Canada's. The remaining parts cover materials, general services and plumbing services, and design for different methods of construction.

Information on the new building code may be obtained from the Secretary, Associate Committee on the National Building Code, Division of Building Research, National Research Council, Ottawa.



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